

Home Magazine

THE HUMILIATION OF SPARKS.

By E. B. CLARK.

"The trouble with your brother John, Eliza," said Mr. Sparks at the dinner table one evening, "is that he doesn't look like a professional. A young doctor ought to look like a doctor. John goes around with his pants turned up at the bottom, the latest cut of a collar, a little dinky necktie and the newest thing in hats. He looks more like a young stockbroker than a sawbones, and people with measles in the family or with legs to be cut off won't have him in simply because he doesn't look a physician's part."

"But," interposed Mrs. Sparks, "John simply dresses neatly and in good taste."

"Oh, I know all that, Eliza, but a physician ought to wear a frock coat, gold-bowed spectacles and a plug hat. When John dresses like that he will get more patients than he has pills for. You mark my words. Why, I remember Scott, doctor of the town, who was something more than fairly successful in my line, when I was a lawyer at least I owed a lot of my clients to the fact that I looked like a lawyer. I want to say again that the whole thing consists in looking your part."

"When I cut law for literature and went to look over the Daily Review for the managing editor when I applied for the position simply looked at me. He knew in a minute from my dress and expression that I was the man for the job. I've dropped the lawyerlike look long since, and now everybody can tell after one glance that I'm in the literary line. There isn't any question about it. I've had strangers say, after being introduced to them: 'You're a writer, aren't you, Mr. Sparks?' and this in the face of the fact that the old gent won't let me sign my articles."

"Yes, Henry," murmured Mrs. Sparks, "you do look literary, with your spectacles and your hair back from your forehead, and all that, but then you cut it, you know, and John says you won't mind this, dear, will you?—that you'll cut it off and dress as he feels that put on unbecoming clothes, though they made him look as wise as Aesculapius."

"Well, Eliza, John's your brother, but I must say that he's got something of the fool in him. When somebody takes me for a butcher I may change my ideas on the subject, but I know what's what," and

Mr. Sparks looked self-sufficient. Henry Sparks believed that the midnight oil made smooth the flow of his thoughts. Thus it was that he did all this book reviewing for the Breeze at night. He went down to the office immediately after dinner and there read novel and history and natural science and essays and wrote about them all until 2 A. M., when he went home.

Now the Sparks family had been troubled in the matter of servants. The maids came and went. Finally Mrs. Sparks ran across a Wilmette acquaintance, who told her all about the experiment the club women of that suburb had tried to better the condition of their domestic employees by the uplifting process. Mrs. Sparks had told her woes and the friend said that she would send her a maid who was not only superior as a housework artist, but had a lofty Christian spirit, a discriminating mind and a code of morals that was as rigid as that of John Calvin.

Two days later the maid reported at the Sparks flat on the South Side. She was everything that her Wilmette sponsor had declared her to be. Mrs. Sparks felt almost guilty because she didn't ask the young woman to dine with the family. Ruth, that was the girl's name, made only one stipulation as to the terms of her acceptance of a position in the Sparks household, and that was about the time that she was to have out. She wanted to go to church twice on Sunday and to have every Wednesday night free from household care, so that she could attend the weekly meeting of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, to which she belonged.

Ruth baked, fried and broiled to a turn. Mr. Sparks had never eaten such dainty and toothsome trifles in the way of omelet souffles, chicken croquettes and Virginia popovers as that girl with the white ribbon of the W. C. T. U. in her buttonhole turned out. "She's all right, Eliza," he said, "hang on to her. Be kind, gentle and patient. I'll promise you that you'll never lose her through me. I think she looks approvingly on my quiet way and literary demeanor."

Mr. Sparks always came home hungry from his book reviewing in the Breeze office. So it was that at 2 o'clock in the morning every day in the week, barr-

ing only Sunday—for Mr. Sparks took Sunday off—he would make his way to the kitchen and there do away with some of the delicate cookery of the young Ruth, which had been left from dinner the night before. They had had Ruth two weeks. It was Thursday morning, the day after the girl had attended the W. C. T. U. meeting, that Henry Sparks thought he detected a troubled look in her face. The girl showed evidence of some inward conflict for the next seven days. On the next Thursday the look of gravity and trouble in her face had disappeared still further.

Friday morning at 2 o'clock, when Henry Sparks reached his room coming from his nightly literary labor in the Breeze office, he found his wife sitting up for him. Her cheeks were tear-stained. "Henry," she said, "Ruth is gone. I know you'll blame me, but I was as kind and good as a woman could be. I kept out of the kitchen and never found fault, but she left just after you had gone to the office last night. She said she was sorry to leave me, but her conscience wouldn't let her stay, and no other reason could I get her to give."

"Oh, well, it's the same old story," said Mr. Sparks; "like all other women, you can't keep a girl, and of course, you're to blame. Why can't you look the part and act the part of a good housekeeper as I look the part and act the part of a literary man?"

That same morning after Mr. Sparks had seven hours' sleep he sat at the breakfast table with his wife. The postman had just been around with the second delivery. There was a letter for Mrs. Sparks. She opened it, read it and then with a peculiar look in her eye she handed it over to her husband. He took it, and this is what he read:

"CHICAGO, May 20.—Dear Mrs. Sparks: I was sorry to leave you. I did not tell you why because I did not like to hurt your feelings, but I think it is better to tell you now. You were kind and good to me, but you know I am a member of the Temperance Union, and my conscience would not let me work in the house of a bartender. I suspected that Mr. Sparks tended bar from his appearance and because he always came home at 2 o'clock in the morning, and then I was made certain of it by finding on the wall behind his door a certificate showing that he was once a member of the Chicago A. B. Association. Can you not turn him from his wicked ways? Yours,

"RUTH JENKINS."

Did Mr. Sparks take it meekly? Did he act and look the part of a lamb as he had always acted and looked the part of a lawyer and subsequently that of a literary man?

"Eliza," he growled, "I'm going to put on a blue shirt, a red necktie and a green vest, and then some blame poor woman will take me for a parson."

AT THE THEATRES NEXT WEEK.

THE NEW YORK'S CHERRY BLOSSOM GROVE WILL OPEN.

Cherry Blossom Grove on the roof of the New York Theatre is announced to open Monday evening with the full complement of the Police, Fire and Building Commissioners, all of whom have had a great deal to say of late about how the fire brothers shall run their roof garden business.

Every one is seemingly satisfied with the improvements that have been made and the public is likely to be pleased to observe the event.



Miss Flora Zabille



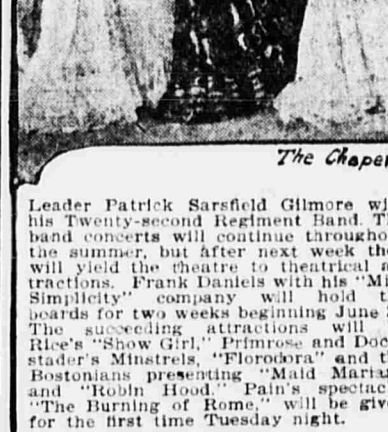
Bessie DeVoe



MA BILLE DAVIS



The Chaparons



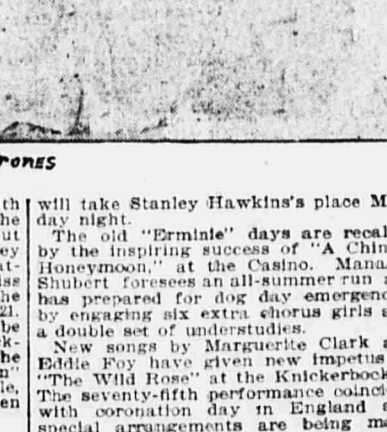
Leader Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore



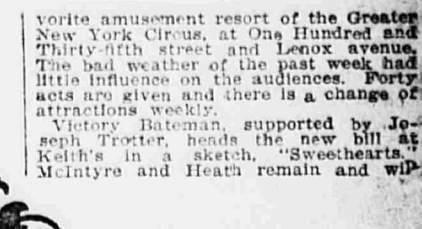
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PLEASURE AND PROFIT IN A DICTIONARY.

Strange as the idea may seem, an immense amount of pleasure may be gotten out of a good etymological dictionary, says a writer in Chambers's Journal. For instance, think first of some words in which ladies are interested. The fine white linen of which cambric handkerchiefs are made is so called because it was first made at Cambrai, in the department of the Nord, France; the gauzy fabric muslin is so named from the town of Moulins in Meo-

pol, whence it was originally made from the wool of the Peruvian sheep of that name, akin to the llama.

In eighteenth century romances we often read of garments made of paduasoy, which was simply a smooth kind of silk originally made at Padua, or so called because of its wrinkled appearance and sharpness to the touch, and is the same word as we know in the form of crisp, and apply to a fresh lettuce. The rough material called frieze was originally made in Friesland, but twined, although Scotch, is not named from the famous Border river—it is a corruption of twill.

There is a Bristol legend that blankets are so called from a family of that name who made these coarser woollen cloths there in the fourteenth century, and the local historian, Pryce, has quite a long tale to tell; but blanket is really blanket, a diminutive of French blanc, from the white color of these bed coverings.

Carpet is from a Latin word meaning to pluck, because it was originally made of rags torn to pieces, so that those who make rag carpets to-day revert to the original fact.

Linen is so named from a very old root, common to Anglo-Saxon and to Latin, from the flax from which it is made, but cotton cloth is called calico because it first came from Calicut, in India.

There is a very curious tale to be told of the common names of spirituous liquors. The North American Indian certainly, and I think the untutored savage in other parts of the world, appropriately called ardent spirits in meaning. The name of the great Scotch product, whisky, means, not indeed fire-water, but water of life, from two Celtic words, uis and beatha. The former is still preserved in the name of Loch Uisg, of the Welsh River Uisg, and of all the Scotch Bks. The uisg of old writers is merely the word whisky in its older dress.

There is another coincidence to be noticed. We call the spirit of the grapes brandy—that is, brand wine. The word brand is still in use for a burned mark, and brandy is burned or distilled wine; but the French call it eau de vit, which, again, is water of life, so that in its own country this proud title is claimed—very wrongly many will think—alike for the malt and the grape spirit. The name grape has a curious history. It is a spirit flavored with juniper berries; the old French form of the Latin juniperus was genivere, so the name of the spirit was confounded with the more familiar

Swiss town Geneva, and Geneva was shortened into gin.

Holland is a differently flavored gin made in Holland. This, of course, was carried by the old Dutch navigators, and was often called Schnapps, which

is a German word for dram, and alluded to the moderate doses of it which were desirable in comparison with more potent beverages. Rum is akin to rumble; it is not needful to investigate this name for an ardent spirit.

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